

LEGAL RESEARCH IN A NJ LAW LIBRARY:  
A SAMPLE QUESTION

***“Actually there’s nothing wrong ...”***

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It all began like this and we agreed to share the story:

*P.U.R. 1923A, 734; P.U.R. 1918A, 792 – “This is the weirdest thing I’ve ever seen commented the librarian; I believe my attorney left something out. But, this is all he gave me.” The librarian, pressed for the case, turned to our law library.  
And, ... Emma to the rescue.*

Being rushed to provide utility-related cases can wear down our best of the best. At the outset, many facets are involved in case tracking. The language is complex and unless you work in this specialized field ... it could give you a headache. Nevertheless, the field of public utility law continues to change as impacted by current times in the business markets, in an overall mission to provide safe, adequate and proper service to all citizens of the State. (N.J.S.A. 48:2-13 et seq).

Meanwhile, the issues are not totally new – rather, they may be enhanced by new laws, as well as technology, and attorneys often want to review the old cases which are yet prominent among the citing references. In my view, attorneys look back on issues while developing a well-

rounded historical background for newer case relevancy. Therefore, when librarians call for public utility cases ... there’s a sense of urgency. Public utility law can be difficult to find. Initially, in New Jersey, cases were published by our Commission and those volumes are rare. Simultaneously, the primary reporter, Public Utilities Reports (P.U.R.) designed its own format to report cases. But, for the immediate request above, the fact that the format does not match with common citations threw us off ... “Actually, however, there’s nothing wrong with P.U.R. 1923A, 734 or P.U.R. 1918A, 792.” Also, remember that these cite are not the same as agency docket numbers that originate with the petition being filed to begin these cases. Agency docketing numbers would call for an entirely different article.

## Emma's Guide to finding P.U.R. cases

### **P.U.R. First Series**

1915 – 1934 Every year the Alphabet went back to A to E, to stop at Vol. 100. Case Cite: P.U.R. 1918A, 792.

### **P.U.R. New Series**

1935 – 1953 Volumes 1-100 Case Cite: 1 P.U.R. (ns) 1.

### **P.U.R. Second Series**

1954 Consist of 10 Digest volumes only.

### **P.U.R. Third Series**

1954 – 1973 Digests 1-10 with Supplements A-G.

Volumes 1-100. Case Cite: 1 P.U.R. 3<sup>rd</sup> 1.

### **P.U.R. Fourth Series**

1974-- Digests and Annuals. No need to keep P.U.R. 3d supplements.

Volumes 1-current – Case Cite: 1 P.U.R. 4<sup>th</sup> 1.

**--Know your Series to locate cases—The First Series is not online—**